

State of Michigan

State House

House Appropriations

Testimony on

SB 1100

By

The American Legion, Department of Michigan

Public Relations Director & Legislative Liaison Mark Sutton

The American Legion Department of Michigan would like to thank Senator Hildenbrand, Senator Knezek, Representative McBroom, and Representative Rutledge for taking the time to be a part of the work group this summer, we are truly appreciative. It has been long overdue and the recommendations made will transform the long term care for Michigan Veterans for the better.

During the Senate hearings, The American Legion had concerns about the make-up of the board and we are glad to report that we came to an agreeable compromise before Senate Bill 1100 was voted on and passed.

Today this committee takes up this same bill and at some point will discuss the funding from the State to make these new homes a reality. The American Legion would like to make one request to the House and this committee regarding funding.

As members of the military we know what it is like to fight with the weapon created by the lowest bidder. We know the difficulties in accomplishing the mission without the best resources. As America's fighting force, we improvised, adapted, and overcame many obstacles to accomplish whatever task was given to us.

As homeowners who have ever decided to remodel or build a home knows that the budget planned on for the project is usually wrong.

Our request is that the House and this committee, when given the final numbers from the MVAA, the budget office, and the policy writers that this body will add an extra ten percent to that budget requested.

If the budget office turns out to be accurate with the number they give you then the extra money can be used for better heating and cooling, better flooring, or something we have not seen yet that would make working in the home and living in the home a better experience.

But if the number comes in low, because of increases in material costs or labor costs, or unforeseen expenses, we do not have to come back and ask for more money.

This truly is an exciting time for our veterans in Michigan. What we do here today will take our State Veteran Home system into a new era. A new system that will care for our veterans for the next 100 years. 10 years from now we could be looking at having 6-7 new homes taking care of our veterans.

Thank you for your time and listening to our concerns and recommendations today. I would be happy to answer any questions the committees may have.